

not you behave in a certain way. That is the philosophy embodied in this tax relief bill.

The second bill is similar in that it raises the personal exemption for each filer in this country. To the extent you have additional dependents, it raises that exemption from \$2,700 to \$3,400, thereby reducing the taxable income to families in this country.

Again, it does it in an across-the-board way and moves us closer to the goal of simplification, so the ultimate goal of a new Tax Code for a new century can be met. I believe that, again, is ultimately where we ought to be heading.

So to the extent we do anything in the next couple of years as we have this debate about tax reform, to lower the tax burden on American people in this country, it ought to be with an eye toward the actual ultimate goal of a new Tax Code for a new century. I support the legislation of the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LARGENT), who is on the floor, to sunset the existing tax code, and I look forward to working with him to see that that becomes the law of the land, irrespective of the footdragging that is happening on the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

#### TAX CODE TERMINATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LARGENT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a few minutes to address some of the comments and concerns that the President made yesterday at a speech when he was talking about the Tax Code Termination Act.

This is a bill that myself and the gentleman from New York (Mr. PAXON) have introduced in the House, H.R. 3097, that simply does this: It sunsets the current Tax Code in the year 2001, December 31. It establishes a date certain that we sunset the entire Tax Code with the exception of the payroll deduction taxes on Social Security and Medicare.

The President in his comment said that it would be irresponsible to sunset the Tax Code, that it would create an environment that would be uncertain and not predictable, and that it would have grave consequences on our economy.

Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, that what is irresponsible is to continue to leave intact the Tax Code as we know it today, a Tax Code that literally is punitive, confusing, confounding. Even the experts do not understand; even the people that are paid to administer the current Tax Code do not understand it.

Recent statistics show that the IRS, you call and ask a question about your individual tax return, 47 percent of the time the Internal Revenue Service gives you the wrong answer. The problem is when you go to court, they take you to Tax Court because you have submitted the wrong answer, you are

guilty, even though you got the wrong answer from the Internal Revenue Service.

The current code drains \$200 billion a year from the U.S. economy. That is how much it costs to file all individual and business tax returns in the United States, over \$200 billion.

5.3 billion hours it takes from American businesses and individual taxpayers to file their tax return, 5.3 billion hours consumed by trying to meet the Tax Code.

Let me just say I believe it is un-American and even immoral to have a Tax Code that punishes taxpayers, punishes businesses, and basically shouts at them, guilty, guilty, guilty. Not innocent. That is what our current Tax Code does.

Let me just throw up a couple of charts for illustration purposes to highlight the problem. This first chart shows the number of words first in the Declaration of Independence, 1,300 words in the Declaration of Independence, the words that define the moral vision of our national government, 1,300 words in the Declaration of Independence.

□ 1800

In the Bible, the holy Bible, the word of God, 773,000 words in the Bible. But take the IRS tax code and all of the case law that supports the tax code, 2.8 million words in the IRS tax code, and the case law to support the IRS tax code. That is wrong. We can do better.

The next chart, I think, highlights why we need to sunset the current tax code. Right here, what you see is two lines rising precipitously since 1964. The orange line you see is the words in the U.S. tax code. The actual code itself contains 800,000 words. From 1964 it quadrupled to 1993 from 200,000 to 800,000.

Members will notice that the number of lobbyists in Washington, D.C. also went from just over 10,000 to 70,000 in that same period of time. The beauty of the tax code Termination Act is this: that we have a national election for the next President in the year 2000. The tax code will be sunset 1 year after that election. So what we will end up having is, if the tax code Termination Act is passed, essentially a national referendum on replacing the tax code.

You have three candidates, A, B, C, from parties A, B, and C. You are a taxpayer and you go to hear them speak, or they are debating. The first question you are going to ask if this bill is passed, the tax code Termination Act, is, "Sir, if I vote for you for President, what will the tax code look like once you become President, 1 year after you take office?"

So we will have a national referendum on flat tax, national sales tax, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT's) modified flat tax, and every other variety therein. We will engage 265 million Americans in a debate at a national level on how we should replace the tax code, not the 70,000 lobbyists in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, I will finish by saying that we need to encourage all Members of the House and the Senate to cosponsor the tax code Termination Act and see the death to this tax code. It is not too soon and hopefully it is not too late.

#### PAYING HONOR TO THE PEACE CORPS AND ITS VOLUNTEERS ON ITS 37TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, this is one of the first 5 minutes I have done in a very long time. I do so because I want to pay honor to the Peace Corps and to the volunteers who have served.

Today is the 37th anniversary of the founding of the Peace Corps by President Kennedy in 1961, as well as the first annual Peace Corps Day.

In my judgment, the Peace Corps is not a Democrat program, not a Republican program, it is a program that is bipartisan. It is a program that has served not only our country with distinction, but also the many countries that we serve. And speaking as a former Peace Corps volunteer, I know we also get so much out of this enriching, cross-cultural experience.

Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is, the Peace Corps has done an extraordinary job, through its volunteers, in bettering the lives of people throughout this world, from providing safe drinking water to helping new businesses start up, from dealing with health care issues to establishing agricultural programs and fishery programs. I also want to commend the tremendous number of volunteers who were teachers and taught in schools throughout the world.

I would like to, as well, pay my respects to the Peace Corps volunteers who happened to serve in Fiji, where I served from 1968 to 1970, who now have completed their task. We have been in Fiji for 30 years, and this past August we bid farewell to our years of service in that beautiful country. The Peace Corps has finished its responsibilities in Fiji.

On August 22, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Education and Technology, Taufa Vakatale, addressed the Peace Corps volunteers who were there and thanked them for their service. Mark Gearan, the director of the Peace Corps, was there as well. I would like to just read a portion of her comments to the volunteers in the closing ceremonies in Fiji.

She said:

The Peace Corps volunteers gave the local people in a new insight into the English language, with the variety of accents, pronunciation and spelling; they gave a new perception of what the white people or Europeans are really like. We learned they are down-to-earth ordinary people—not a class above locals.

She goes on to say:

The presence of the American Peace Corps volunteers in Fiji has made us in Fiji more aware of the importance of giving something back to society rather than expecting something from society. The fact that the volunteers have come from afar to give of themselves to a society they owe nothing to have made us realize that we are all a part of a global village. Thank you, Peace Corps, for that valuable lesson in the giving of oneself for the advancement of peace in this global community.

We, the people of Fiji, cannot be disheartened by this departure, for were it simply a matter of choice, we the people and the government of Fiji, would always prefer to maintain our personal and close relationship with the Peace Corps. We also sincerely believe that if it weren't for existing circumstances, this longing would be reciprocated by the government and people of the United States of America.

Then she concludes:

To all those Peace Corps volunteers presently serving or who have graced our tropical islands in the past, words simply cannot express the gratitude our people and government would like to extend to you all, especially your having given up a specific time in your lives to spend with us. In retrospect, I can only try and fathom the sense of your leaving behind your land of skyscrapers, freeways and mega-entertainment to come down to a country such as ours with its basic facilities, unfamiliarity, food and inclement weather.

Nevertheless, I can only be grateful for your courage and service towards humanity, for in your caring and hope for a more humane world, you have been great ambassadors of your great nation.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the entire statement of the Deputy Prime Minister, and once again congratulate the Peace Corps, congratulate the volunteers who served, and congratulate our country for having the foresight, and a former President, President Kennedy, for establishing the Peace Corps.

The remarks of the Honorable Taufa Vakatale are as follows:

Honorable Christopher Shays, Peace Corps Director Mark Gearan, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen: It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all here tonight on behalf of the government and people of Fiji to farewell from our shores of the United States Peace Corps. Pleasure, of course, not in the Corps' departure, but in your attendance here tonight to share in this rather small gesture of appreciation towards the endurance, grace, self-sacrifice, and unwavering determination the young women and men of the Peace Corps volunteers, brought with them to our islands, and have shared with us over the last 30 years.

The contribution of the Peace Corps towards the socio-economic development of the country, among others in the immediate region, does not need any elaboration other than the fact that the cross-cultural exchanges since have further enriched our already diverse society. When the Peace Corps volunteers first came to Fiji, they were used mainly in teaching in the rural areas. The majority went out to remote rural primacy schools where they lived in thatched bures with no electricity, piped water and other basic facilities. They mingled with the villagers and spoke the language, are the local food and generally participated in all the communal activities such as fish-drives, Mekes, church services, etc.

The Peace Corps volunteers gave the local people a new insight into the English lan-

guage, with the variety of accents, pronunciations and spelling; they gave a new perception of what the white people or Europeans are really like. We learned that they are down-to-earth ordinary people—not a class above locals.

Many Peace Corps volunteers, over the years, have taken part in ceremonial Mekes, one performed with the people of Cakaudrove for Queen Elizabeth II's visit in the early 70's. One notable Peace Corps volunteer was renowned for making wine from local fruit, another helped to establish a museum collection of local artifacts, etc. in a school. Another volunteer who was a teacher in an outlying island helped the islanders to develop a cheap and effective Copra drier. Yet another, Alipate of Koro, turned to music and sang many Fijian songs which have been taped and sold locally. I could go on and on, but suffice it say that they have endeared themselves to the people of Fiji.

While Peace Corps volunteers have given their services in all areas of government, let me just highlight the Corps' contribution to education. In the early days the volunteers were posted to rural schools to help in the teaching of English and Math. We soon found, however, that we were wasting valuable resources and that this was not how we could use them efficiently. Hence they were posted to secondary schools to upgrade and assist in the teaching of math and science and at one stage, in the teaching of economics and accounting. We have not yet produced enough local teachers to replace the volunteers who were especially good in physics, chemistry and math, and my Ministry will certainly feel the gap left by the volunteers when they leave.

The presence of the American Peace Corps volunteers in Fiji has made us in Fiji more aware of the importance of giving something back to society rather than expecting something from society. The fact that the volunteers have come from afar to give of themselves to a society they owe nothing to have made us realize that we are all a part of a global village. Thank you Peace Corps for that valuable lesson in the giving of oneself for the advancement of peace in this global community.

The departure of the Peace Corps exemplifies one of the significant developments now taking place in our global community and which we developing countries will have to address immediately and effectively. That of diminishing assistance from developed countries in the North due to a general shift in foreign policy following the end of the Cold War and as their respective citizens demand improved public services neglected or overlooked prior to 1991.

We, the people of Fiji, cannot be disheartened by this departure, for were it simply a matter of choice we the people and government of Fiji, would always prefer to maintain our personal and close relationship with the Peace Corps. We also sincerely believe that if it weren't for existing circumstances this longing would be reciprocated by the government and people of the United States of America.

To all those Peace Corps Volunteers presently serving or who have graced our tropical islands in the past, words simply cannot express the gratitude our people and government would like to extend to you all, especially your having given up a specific time in your lives to spend here with us. In retrospect, I can only try and fathom the sense of your leaving behind your land of skyscraper, freeway and mega-entertainment to come down to a country such as ours with its basic facilities, unfamiliarities, food and inclement weather.

Nevertheless, I can only be grateful for your courage and service towards humanity,

for in your caring and hope for a more humane world you have been great ambassadors of your great nation. Your contribution to our nation is substantial and is gratefully acknowledged. In appreciation of your 30 years of dedication and devotion toward the progress of our nation let me say, "Vinaka Vakalevu."

The words of Dr. Albert Schweitzer come to mind as I try to find words to thank the American Peace Corps volunteers: "I do not know what your destinies will be. But I know that those amongst you who will be the happiest are those who will have sought and found how to serve."

I know you have come to Fiji to be of service and you have found how to give that service effectively to Fiji. It is thus my hope and the hope of the people and government of Fiji that you have been happy.

#### REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 856, UNITED STATES-PUERTO RICO POLITICAL STATUS ACT

Mr. SOLOMON (during the special order of Mr. SHAYS), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 105-426) on the resolution (H. Res. 376) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 856) to provide a process leading to full self-government for Puerto Rico, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### APPOINTMENT AS PARTICIPANTS TO THE NATIONAL SUMMIT ON RETIREMENT SAVINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to the provisions of section 517(e)(3) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1131), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following participants on the part of the House to the National Summit on Retirement Savings.

Without objection, the names of participants will appear in the RECORD.

There was no objection.  
Ms. Meredith Bagby, NY  
Mr. James E. Bayne, TX  
Mr. Carroll A. Campbell, Jr., SC  
Ms. Joyce Campbell, Washington, D.C.

Ms. Hilda Cannon, GA  
Mr. Christopher W. Clement, AZ  
Mr. Benjamin Tanner Domenech, VA  
Mr. Clinton A. Demetriou, GA  
Mr. Pete du Pont, DE  
Mr. Adam Dubitsky, Washington, D.C.

Ms. Lynn D. Dudley, Washington, D.C.

Mr. Ric Edelman, VA  
Mr. John N. Erlenborn, MD  
Ms. Shannon Evans, NV  
Mr. Harris W. Fawell, IL  
Mr. Peter J. Ferrara, VA  
Mr. Ray Gaydos, Washington, D.C.  
Mr. Craig Gholston, TX  
Mr. Arthur Glatfelter, PA  
Mr. Dylan Glenn, GA  
Mr. James T. Gordon, GA  
Mr. Brian H. Graff, VA  
Mr. Matthew Greenwald, Washington, D.C.